

Chairman Senator BEN CARDIN of Maryland for holding a hearing hosted by the Helsinki Commission on July 22, 2008, titled "Promises to Keep: Kazakhstan's 2010 OSCE Chairmanship". In maintaining the Commission's monitoring duties, the hearing focused on allegations of corruption, human rights abuses and religious intolerance in Kazakhstan. This was the second in a series of hearings during which my colleagues questioned the selection of Kazakhstan as the next leader of the OSCE and its commitment to reform measures. Kazakhstan's Chairmanship has been a controversial issue as many human rights groups and lawmakers have cited a poor human rights record and lack of democratic reform in Kazakhstan. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher testified that political and economic overhauls are needed in Kazakhstan, adding "That is the only way to get away from corruption".

A month prior to this hearing, Chairman HASTINGS and Co-Chairman CARDIN led a bipartisan delegation to Kazakhstan in order to attend the OSCE's 17th Annual Session, which took place in Astana, Kazakhstan's capital city. Additionally, Members of the delegation met with President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Prime Minister Karim Masimov and Secretary of State Kanat Saudabayev.

Clearly Members of the Commission remain concerned not only by the promises made to establish democratic reform by year's end, but also by "very serious allegations" of corruption in the oil-rich nation which could further complicate its relations with the U.S. and the West, as well as human rights abuses, human trafficking, freedom of religion, freedom of the press and rigged elections. When democracy fails that spills over into every other walk of life and the people of Kazakhstan are the ones who suffer.

I know my colleagues in the U.S. Congress share my concern and I encourage our collective support of the Helsinki Commission in calling on the government of Kazakhstan to uphold its commitment to establish democratic reforms as it has promised to do.

TRIBUTE TO HILLCREST ORCHARD

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share my pride in an exceptional family agricultural operation that is celebrating 100 years of quality, excellence, and responsible citizenship: the Parsons family and their Hillcrest Orchard in the heart of the Rogue Valley in southern Oregon. The Rogue Valley is known worldwide for its natural scenic beauty, its productive land, its ideal climate, and its coveted outdoor lifestyle. Hillcrest Orchard is in harmony with, and takes its inspiration from, the unique attributes of the Rogue Valley.

Hillcrest Orchard has been proudly operated by the Parsons family since its founding on July 13, 1908 by Reginald H Parsons and Maude Bemis Parsons. One of the oldest continuously-owned family orchards in the Rogue Valley, Hillcrest has long grown some of the region's finest fruit and produce. Four genera-

tions have worked tirelessly to maintain a high standard of quality and to operate always in ways responsible to the environment. Philanthropy and service to the community have been hallmarks of the Parsons family throughout Hillcrest's 100 year history.

Eleven grandchildren of Reginald and Maude are shareholders of Hillcrest: John Day, Hugh Brady, Judson Parsons, George Parsons, Reg Parsons, Geoffrey Tootell, Nancy McDonald, Diana Parsons, Natalie Oliver, Alice Petrich, and Cynthia Parsons. Currently, a fourth generation is involved in Hillcrest and the plan is for members of that generation to assume active management and further the well-established tradition of excellence and service.

As you can imagine, Madam Speaker, over the last 100 years, there have been many challenges in conducting successful orchard operations, but the Parsons family never let economic or natural disasters deter them. During the Depression and World War II, the family retained their employees and kept the fruit trees in healthy condition. By 1938, Reginald Parsons had gradually removed all of the apple trees and replaced them with pears, since the latter were more profitable. As the older pear trees declined in production, workers replaced them with new stock. Today, some of the orchard's earliest pear trees remain standing, producing Hillcrest's famous "century pears."

Not only has the Parsons family preserved their rich agricultural legacy, but also, through their stewardship, 11 buildings on the property of Hillcrest Orchard are now listed in the National Register of Historic Places. My colleagues, I have spent much time at Hillcrest Orchard and I can attest that it is truly a jewel in a very beautiful part of the country. It is a beautiful and welcoming place to visit, and their products are second to none. Hillcrest Orchard today remains very true to its century-old proud heritage of quality and innovation. What was once on the outskirts of Medford, Oregon is now surrounded by residential and commercial development, yet Hillcrest continues to operate in environmentally sound ways that makes it a model neighbor to the community. Hillcrest Orchard is dedicated to conserving the land for the health of the community and for future generations.

The most recent development at Hillcrest is the award-winning Roxy Ann Winery, featuring a charming tasting room, well-groomed grounds, musical entertainment, and social events. The planting of Hillcrest's vineyard began in 1997 with Merlot and Cabernet grapes. Hillcrest has expanded its selection of varietals along with acreage. Currently, 14 commercial varieties are grown at Roxy Ann's vineyards, including Bordeaux and Rhone grapes that flourish in the Rogue River Valley's warm climate and have thrived in similar climates and soils in Europe for hundreds of years. Local shallow clay soils help the vines concentrate the flavors in the fruit rather than producing huge vines. The viticulture and wine-making team at Roxy Ann is constantly evaluating varieties suited to this unique site.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, I take great pride in the last century of the Parsons family dedication to excellence at Hillcrest Orchard, and I ask you to join me in congratulating them for this significant feat and wishing

them well as they enter their second century of exemplary business and service to the Rogue Valley. They have the tradition and the family dedication to make the next 100 years even more productive than the last. The Parsons family represents what is great about American agriculture and American families, and they will continue to give their customers and their community the very best.

TRIBUTE TO ALAN LOESSY

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. SHUSTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the career and mark the retirement of Alan Loessy from the Letterkenny Army Depot in Franklin County, Pennsylvania. Alan Loessy began his 33 year long career in public service as a field representative in Franklin County for Congressman BUD SHUSTER. His exemplary work for the people of the 9th Congressional District made him a perfect candidate to join the outstanding team at the Letterkenny Army Depot and in May 1989 he joined the Letterkenny staff as a personnel management specialist.

In his capacity at Letterkenny, Mr. Loessy worked on behalf of the thousands of employees entering or departing civil service from Letterkenny and its many tenant activities. It was a job that required dedication, extreme patience, and a complete understanding of the Depot's position in the family of Department of Defense facilities as the installation downsized. Alan's support to those many individuals during the transition will long be remembered.

In July 1995 Alan was assigned as a public affairs specialist and became the Letterkenny Public Affairs Officer. He worked to convey the message of the contributions the men and women of Letterkenny made to the defense of the nation. He was the public face of the depot to the media and worked cooperatively with print and television reporters to leave a positive and lasting impression of the good work being done inside the depot fence line.

In 2002 Mr. Loessy was one of the founding members of Opportunity 05, a local group that helped build the case for Letterkenny's continued growth under 2005 Base Realignment and Closing round. The success of that effort was celebrated by many but none more so than Alan who played a key role behind the scenes.

Throughout his long career, Alan Loessy personified dedication, commitment and excellence to the people employed by Letterkenny and the corps of civilian employees in the Department of Defense. I know first hand how hard he worked with my own staff to promote the mission of the Letterkenny Army Depot. While Alan will be missed by everyone, his retirement brings new opportunities for him to follow. I along with the entire Shuster family wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors and congratulate Alan Loessy for a job well done.